

Message Text

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14

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TAGS: TSPA UR US

SUBJ: ASTP: JOINT POST-FLIGHT CREW VISITS TO USSR AND USA

REF: STATE 148310

1. EMBASSY STRONGLY SUPPORTS PROPOSAL FOR JOINT POST-FLIGHT CREW VISITS TO U.S. AND USSR. WE VIEW SUCH A VISIT AS ADVANCING OUR OBJECTIVES HERE THROUGH EMPHASIZING THE BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND PUTTING A HUMAN FACE ON WHAT SHOULD BECOME A SPECTACULAR JOINT MISSION.

2. WE SUGGEST THAT THE FOLLOWING SOVIET AREAS BE VISITED. THEY ARE LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, DETERMINED FROM SIZE AND GROWTH RATE.

MOSCOW/GORKY

LENINGRAD

KIEV/KHARKOV

TASHKENT

MINSK

NOVOSIBIRSK

YEREVAN

MOSCOW, LENINGRAD AND KIEV ARE "MUSTS" IN OUR VIEW AS
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THE THREE LARGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT CITIES IN THE

COUNTRY. GORKY (WHICH, HOWEVER, IS A CITY NORMALLY CLOSED TO FOREIGNERS) AND KHARKOV ARE LARGE POPULATION CENTERS NEAR MOSCOW AND KIEV, RESPECTIVELY, AND THEREFORE OFFER FEW PROBLEMS LOGISTICALLY. TASHKENT HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING IN CENTRAL ASIA, A NON-SLAVIC AREA OF RAPID POPULATION GROWTH AND EXPANDING ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE. MINSK IS THE FASTEST-GROWING LARGE CITY IN THE USSR. NOVOSIBIRSK, OF COURSE, IS A SCIENCE CENTER, WITH A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF INTELLECTUALS AND A GROWING POPULATION. YEREVAN IS ALSO IN A NON-SLAVIC AREA--THE CAUCASUS--HAS SOME TRADITIONAL TIES WITH THE U.S. IN ITS ARMENIAN POPULATION, AND IS ALSO A CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY.

3. AS FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS, WE ADVOCATE THE MAXIMUM PUBLIC EXPOSURE IN ALL CITIES/PUBLIC RALLIES, APPEARANCES AT MASS SPORTING EVENTS, PUBLIC CEREMONIES, INTERVIEWS AND TV APPEARANCES. IF POSSIBLE, A "MEET THE PRESS" TYPE INTERVIEW SHOW WITH BOTH CREWS AND SOVIET AND AMERICAN JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE ARRANGED FOR VIEWING ON U.S. AND SOVIET TV. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT MOSCOW 7822 AND LAST PARAGRAPH OF MOSCOW 7723, WE URGE THAT, TO EXTENT POSSIBLE, SOVIETS BE TIED DOWN ON DEGREE OF TELEVISION COVERAGE GIVEN OUR ASTRONAUTS WHILE IN USSR.

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